ORCHIDS

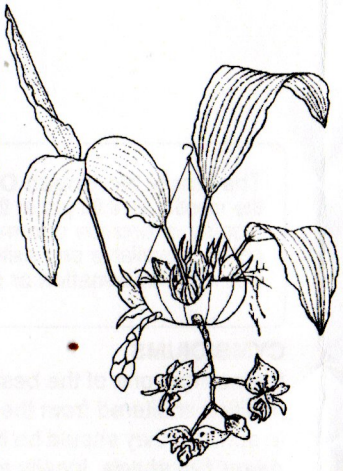
A CULTURAL LEAFLET

The **Manly Warringah Orchid Society Inc.** meets once a month, (usually on the 4th Thursday of the month), at 8:00 pm at the Cromer Community Centre, Fisher Road, Cromer. There is always a display of orchids and many growers are available to answer your questions. A cup of tea or coffee is available and visitors are most welcome.
For more information or a particular date phone the Secretary on 9940 0797.

CYMBIDIUMS

Sydney has one of the best climates in the world for growing cymbidiums. All that is needed is a position sheltered from the South-Easterlies, preferably facing the east with plenty of light & air. In summer they should be lightly shaded to give slightly broken sunlight, till at least 1:00 pm ***but never full shade***. Ideally a cover of 30% shadecloth overhead is best. In winter no shading is necessary. Plants will flower better if leaves are a light green colour or even a little sunburnt.
Good drainage is essential. Buy a good cymbidium compost from any local nursery for potting. Orchid Care Services makes an excellent one. ***Never use garden soil.***
A 4 to 5 bulb flowering plant should need a 200 mm (8") pot or larger. As good drainage is essential, black plastic pots with large drainage holes are ideal. When re-potting large plants, you may either pot into a larger pot by leaving the roots undisturbed and packing more compost around them in a new pot or divide the plant into two or more sections and pot each section individually. If you are dividing the plant, cut off any leafless bulbs, *backbulbs*, remove all roots and dead leaves and put into a separate small pot. When dividing, always leave at least 3 or 4 bulbs together per piece and try not to break too many roots. Pot your plant, packing the pot fairly tightly with compost till the bottom 1/5 of the bulbs are covered. Plants need re-potting approximately every two years, with the backbulbs to the side of the pot to allow new growths to progress across the pot.
When watering, water should ***almost immediately*** flow from the drain holes in the pot when it is applied. Plants should be watered heavily three or four times a week in summer and once or twice a week in winter, if the plant needs water. In the summer try to water in the evening. This will cool the plant and the water will last longer. Never let your pots dry out completely.
Fertilize with a recognised fertilizer, such as Peters Excel Grower®, Peters Excel Finisher®, Blossom Booster®, Aquasol, Maxicrop, applied as directed after normal watering. Apply at least twice a month. High Nitrogen through the growing period August to December, low Nitrogen fertilizer January to July.
Flower spikes should begin to show between the first leaves of the newer bulbs, between February and April and flowers are out anytime between May and October; mainly August/September.
Pastel greens and whites will have truer colours if placed in the shade when buds break out of the sheath. When in flower bring them inside for 4-5 days then take them outside for a drink and fresh air.

STANHOPEA

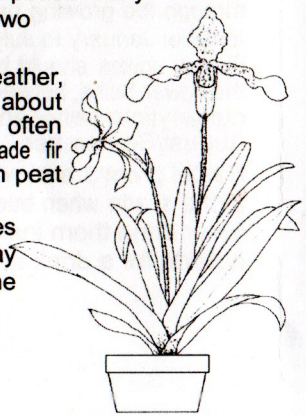


Stanhopea are best grown in a wire basket. Stanhopea grow well in straight cymbidium compost, sphagnum moss, fine seedling bark and in various mixtures. Any compost that gives quick drainage is OK. Line the wire baskets with paper bark, *not too thick* . There is a temptation, when paper bark tends to break down at the base of the basket, to double up on the thickness of the paper bark.

Air movement is very important to Stanhopea. In Summer, the happiest plants are the ones hanging outside under a tree. Stanhopea need high humidity and frequent watering with weak fertiliser in Summer. Reduce watering in Winter but don't let them dry out. From November on, watch closely for the first signs of flower spikes. They could show through the paper bark anywhere. Or they could come from the base of a mature bulb and skid across and over the edge of the basket. If a spike is heading towards a wire, bend the wire out of the way. Stanhopea aren't usually bothered with pests, but make a point of watering the leaves as well as the compost because dry Stanhopea leaves can attract red spider.

PAPHIOPEDILUM

Paphiopedilum, or slipper orchids, originate from the jungles of the Far East and Indonesia. They are semi-terrestrial, growing in humus and other material on the forest floor. They like shady conditions, they are often grown under the bench, provided precautions are taken to prevent rot. Since they have no pseudobulbs they store most of their water in their leaves. They need a moist medium - never soggy, but never dry. Water once or twice a week. Humidity for Paphs should be moderate, between 40% and 50%, which can be maintained by setting the plants on trays of gravel partially filled with water, so that the plants never sit in water. Air movement is essential, especially when humidity is high. **Temperatures** - for Paphs range considerably. Many growers separate Paphs into two groups, the warm-growing mottled leaf types and the cool-growing, green-leaf types. However, many growers grow all plants in the same temperature range with excellent success. The plants can stand night temperatures in the 3-10° C range if necessary if grown outside in mild climates, as well as temperatures to 32° C. Care must be taken to protect the plants from rot when cold, keep humidity low, and do not let water stand on leaves or in the crowns of the plants. Also to protect leaves from burning when hot, shade more heavily and increase humidity and air movement. **Fertilizer** - must be applied on a regular schedule, but care must be taken to avoid burning of the fleshy, hairy roots. Peters Excel Grower®, is recommended when potted in any fir bark mix. In warm weather, some growers use half strength applications every two weeks; others use 1/4 strength every watering. It's important to flush with clear water monthly to leach excess fertilizer, which can burn roots. In cool weather, fertilizer applications once a month are sufficient. Potting - should be done about every two years, or as the medium decomposes. Seedlings are often re-potted annually. Mixes vary tremendously; most are fine and/or medium grade fir bark mix, with varying additives - perlite *sponge rock*, coarse sand, sphagnum peat moss, etc. Moisture retention with excellent drainage is needed. Divide large plants, by pulling or cutting the fans or the leaves apart, into clumps of 3-5 growths. Smaller divisions will grow, but may not bloom as well, spread the roots over a small amount of medium in the bottom of the pot and fill with medium, so that the junction of roots and stem is buried 10-12 mm deep in the centre of the pot. Do not over-pot; an average plant should have a 100-150 mm pot.



PHALAENOPSIS

The Moth Orchid, is one of the best orchids for growing in the home, and is also a favourite with glasshouse growers. **Temperatures** - for Phalaenopsis should usually be above 15°C at night, and range between 24-29°C or more during the day. Although higher temperatures force faster vegetative growth, higher humidity and air movement must accompany higher temperatures, Fluctuating temperatures can cause bud drop on plants with buds ready to open. **Light** - is easy to provide for Phalaenopsis. They grow easily in a bright window, with little or no sun. An East window is ideal in the home. Shaded north or west windows are acceptable. Water - is especially critical for Phalaenopsis. Because they have no major water-storage organs other than their leaves, they must never completely dry out. Plants should be thoroughly watered and not watered again until nearly dry through the pot. In the heat of summer in a dry climate, this may be every other day; in the winter in a cool southern glasshouse, it may be every ten days. Water only in the morning, so that the leaves are dry by nightfall, to prevent rot from occurring on the leaves. **Humidity** - is important to Phalaenopsis, in the home, set the plants on trays of gravel, partially filled with water, so that the pots never sit in water. Mist the plants in dry climates, or during dry weather, in the morning only. Grouping plants together raises the humidity by conserving the water that plants transpire. In humid climates, as in glasshouses, it is imperative that the humid air is moving to prevent fungal or bacterial disease. Again, leaves should be dry as soon as possible, always by nightfall.

Fertilizer - should be applied on a regular schedule, especially if the weather is warm, when the plants are most often growing. Twice a month applications of Peters Excel Grower® is appropriate in warm, humid conditions. When flowering is desired, Peters Excel Finisher® may be applied to promote blooming. Some growers apply fertilizer at 1/4 strength with every watering; this is best for warm, humid conditions. Cooler, or dull conditions, fertilizer should be applied once a month. Mature plants can grow in the same pot until the potting medium starts to decompose, usually in two years. Plants are potted in medium-grade fir bark.

POTTING A CATTLEYA

A Cattleya is re-potted for either of two reasons or for both: that it has outgrown its pot or the potting medium has broken down.

OUTGROWN POT

Different plants have different habits of growth. Type one develops in a nice, compact and circular type of growth, each successive growth adding to an ever-widening circle. Type two grow in a forking manner, whilst type three grow like "a crow flies", straight across the pot.

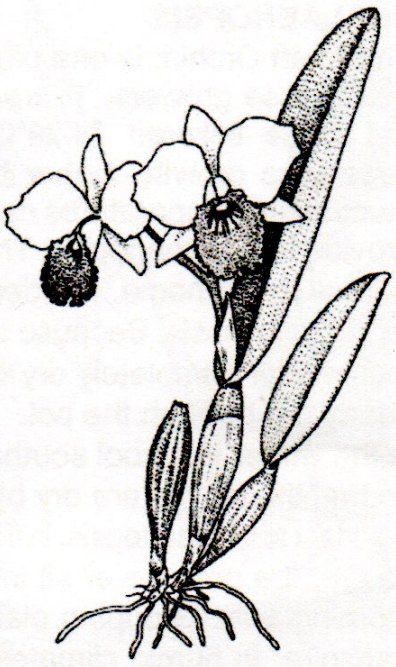
1. ***The circular growth*** this type of growth is the ideal plant. It fills the pot without overgrowing the pot prematurely and it lends itself admirably to specimen culture.
2. ***The forking growth*** this is an easily managed type with help of a little judicious partial back-cutting.
3. ***The straight growth*** this type is rather frustrating and the growth is mainly controlled by the knife.

POTTING MEDIUM BROKEN DOWN

Plants in a medium that has broken down will soon deteriorate if left in the mix for any extended period. Re-potting of a Cattleya should be when the new roots are just beginning to show at the base of the bulb, or up to 20 mm long.

Re-potting: Assuming that it is a favorable time for re-potting the plant, go ahead and repot. The main aim is to carry out the re-potting with as little shock as possible to the plant. Plants grown in plastic pots are fairly easy to remove from the container. Simply squeeze the pot in your hand.

The idea is to flex the roots or some of them from the edge of the pot. Then grasp the plant firmly about the pseudo-bulbs with one hand the other hand around the pot, gently pull with a slight rocking motion with the hand - this should free the plant from the pot with as little damage as possible. If this is not possible then a thin blade slipped around the inside of the pot will free most of the roots. Throw out broken-down compost it may be good for the garden but not in the pot. Having ~~cleaned~~ all old potting mix away, trim off all old and dead roots and shorten very long roots to about 10 - 12 cm. You cut long roots back because if you tried to repot these long roots they could get broken and rot in the pot.



At this stage don't start to divide the plant, instead consider what you want from it. Whenever you divide a plant it sets it back, so don't cut it unless you have to. The aim should be for a progressively larger plant. Don't restrict the plant to a 20 cm pot but rather grow it to the size you want and can manage. If you want to fill a one-metre pot go ahead and do it, just remember the limitations are on you not on the pot.

Before any re-potting can be done the compost or potting medium should be prepared. There are numerous potting media that may be used for Cattleyas and they are selected for their mechanical properties not for what is in them. Fir bark is what I use without any additions to stretch it. If fir bark is used it should be soaked in water for one hour before use and then drained of excess water; by doing this it makes it receptive to water when applied to the pot. Having prepared the plant, the next thing is to pot it. If it is to be grown into a specimen plant it can be put straight into the pot. With fir bark all that is needed is a little shake to settle the bark as you pour it in. Having re-potted the plant it can be returned to the bench with the other plants. If there is any danger of the plant moving in the pot before the roots have anchored it securely, it needs to be staked. When firmly established the stakes may be removed.

If the plant is to be divided leave at least three bulbs for every division to ensure flowers on the next growth. It may be that the plant has, say, five bulbs - so what do we do? Easy, between the third and fourth growth cut about one-third of the way through the rhizome - this will stimulate the rear bulbs and pot in the usual way. After re-potting keep the potting mix damp and spray the leaves frequently to further stimulate the plant.

Cattleyas grow well under 50% shadecloth all year round. Just try to keep them drier over winter. Water well in summer and fertilize as your other orchids. The thing to remember with your fertilizing of plants is to do it on a regular basis for best results. If you're not sure about watering then wait until the next day. Remember with all fertilizing 'weakly weekly'.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Large amounts of fertilizers are not required with the exception of Cymbidiums but the use of Peters Excel Grower®, Peters Excel Finisher®, Blossom Booster®, Aquasol®, Phostrogen®, are recommended and alternate with slow release Ozmacote® or Blood'n'Bone.

The main pests of orchids are snails & slugs, which eat flowers and leaves causing severe damage. Use a good snail bait. Dendrobium Beetle can be controlled with Carbaryl®.

Like many other garden plants, orchids can be susceptible to such things as red spider, scale and chewing & sucking insects. Carbaryl, Daconil, Mancozeb & Zineb sprayed as directed will solve most of these problems, but do not spray when buds are out of the flower sheath. Should you encounter any bulb rot, a fungicide such as Fongarid will check this. If you are not sure what to do then ask someone.

The Manly Warringah Orchid Society Inc. disclaim any responsibility, for any losses or damage that may be attributed to the use or misuse of any material published in this brochure.

St Ives Orchid Fair

'The Big One'

Ku·ring·gai Council

In partnership with
Ku-ring-gai Council

ST IVES SHOWGROUND
Mona Vale Road, St Ives

Friday 15th August 2025	**9 am to 4 pm**
Saturday 16th August 2025	**9 am to 4 pm**
Sunday 17th August 2025	**9 am to 3 pm**

Bus Routes196/197: Gordon Station - St Ives Village - Terrey Hills - Mona Vale
ADMISSION $10 Children under 18 free

Bus groups welcome - concession,
Unlimited Free Parking, Wheel chair access

Orchid displays, and advice from experts

MAJOR SPONSORS
Rosella Orchids
Garden City Plastics

ORCHID VENDORS

Alice's Orchids, Barrita Orchids, Dark Star Orchids, Ezi-Gro Orchids, Fong Ping Orchids, Hills District Orchids, Kings Orchid Nursery, Macquarie Native Orchids, Nicky's Slippers, Orchid Care Services, Orchid Species Plus, Orchids of Distinction, Orchid Mania Orchids on Newbold, Robertson Orchids, Rosella Orchids, Tinonee Orchids, The Orchid Mart / Serhan's Orchids

For more Information: Show Marshal: Garrie Bromley Ph: 0425 336 049
http://www.stivesorchidfair.com/